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Nalanda

Ghosh, A.

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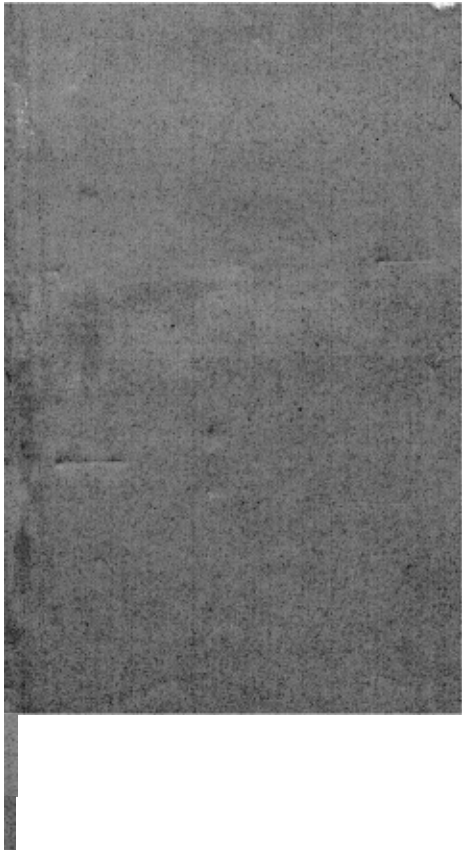
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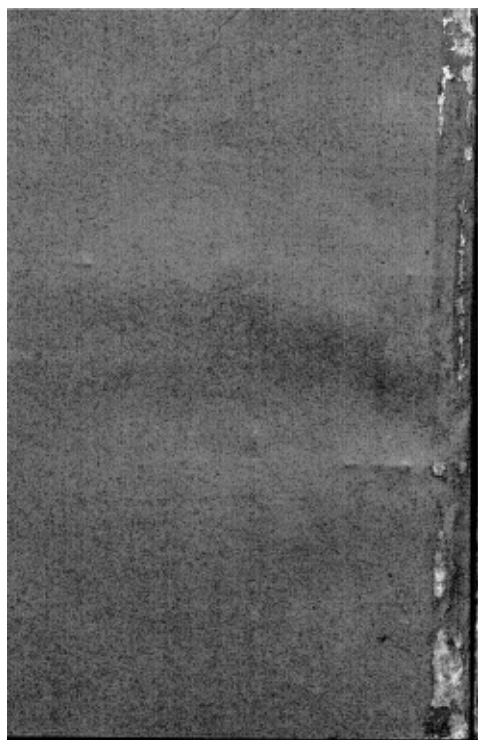
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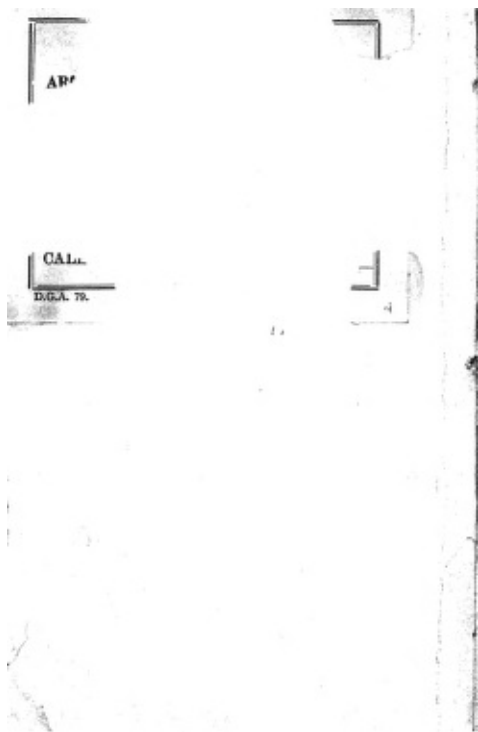




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1. GENERAL INFORMATION

The ruins of the ancient Buddhist establishments of Nalanda lie close to the village of Bargaon, 90 kilometres south-east of Patna and 11 kilometres north of Rajgir, the ancient Rajagriha. They are situated at a distance of about 2 kilometres from the Nalanda station on the Eastern Railway. They are also easily accessible by road from Patna, whence there is a regular bus service to Rajgir via Nalanda.

The excavated remains are daily open to visitors from 9 A.M. to 5.30 p.m. The local Archaeological Museum, wherein are displayed the objects excavated at Nalanda and Rajgir, is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission to the remains and the Museum is governed by rules, which include the imposition of nominal fees. There are also rules, available with the local officers, for the taking of photographs. A large number of photographs are available for sale with the Director General of Archaeology in India, New Delhi, and the Superintendent, Archaeological Survey of India, Mid-eastern Circle, Patna. "

There is a rest-house at Nalanda, accommodation in which can be reserved by prior application to the

Executive Engineer, P.W.D., Bihar-Sharif (District Patna).

2. HISTORY

Early references. —Nalanda has a very ancient history going back to the days of Mahavira and Buddha in the sixth and fifth centuries B.C. According to Jaina texts it was a suburb (bdhiya) situated to the northwest of the famous city of Rajagriha. Indeed, so important was the place that Mahavira spent as many as fourteen rainy seasons here. The Pali Buddhist literature as well contains many references to Nalanda. It is said that in the course of his sojourns Buddha often visited the place, which is mentioned as prosperous, swelling, teeming with population and containing a mango-grove called Pavatika. The distance from Rajagriha to Nalanda is given as 2 yojana.

Another place near Rajagriha was Nala, which is mentioned in the Mahāśālistassana-Jātaka as the birthplace of the Elder Śāriputra, a chief disciple of Buddha. In other texts the same place, under the name of Nāka or Nalākāgrāma, appears as a centre of Śāriputra's activities.[®] But the Mahāvastu, a Sanskrit Buddhist text, gives Nālanda-grāma, half a yojana distant from Rajagriha, as the place of birth of Śāriputra and finds

^ In ancient literature both the forms Nālanda and Nālandī occur indiscriminately.

* For references, see Hirananda Sastri in Proceedings of the Fijlh

Orwttal ConfermUy I (Lahore, 1930). •

• Sec B. C. Law, Geography of Early Buddhism (London, 1932), p. 31.

support in some Tibetan texts, including Taranātha's history of Buddhism, a seventeenth-century Tibetan work.^ It is therefore reasonable to hold that Nala, Nāka, Nālakāgrāma and Nālanda are all the variants of the same place-name.

Origin of the name.— Hiuen Tsang, the renowned Chinese traveller of the seventh century, says that according to tradition the place owed its name to a ndga of the same name who resided in a local tank. But he thinks it more probable that Buddha, in one of his previous births as Bodhisattva, became a king with his capital at this place, and that his liberality won for him and his capital the name Nālanda or 'charity without intermission'.*

Early history by Taranātha.— According to Taranātha, Aśoka, the great Mauryan emperor of the third century b.g., gave offerings to the t^chāi^a. of Śāriputra that existed, at Nālanda and erected a temple here; Aśoka must therefore be regarded as the founder of the Jālanda-piAjrfl.* ' the same authority adds that Nāgarjuna, the famous Mahāyāna philosopher and alchemist of about the second century a.d., began his studies at Nālanda and later on became the high-priest

IF A ^hicfeer, TSranStha^s Gackkhte des Buddhistr^ tn Indwt p 65. Sec also N. L. Dcy, Geographical Dictionary of Ancmt and

Mediaeval Mia (London, 1927), j. v. Nākmda.

*S. Beal, *Buddhist Records of the Western World* (London, 1906^{11.0.167}). The derivation has ⁿproposca, but it does not satisfactorily convey the sense that it is intended to.

» Schielhcr, op. cit., pp. 65 ff.

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here. It is also added that Suvishnu, a Brahmana [^]contemporary of Nagaijuna, built one hundred and eight temples at Nalanda to prevent the decline of both the Hinay^a and MahayAna schools of Buddhism.[^] TArana^ha also connects Aryadeva, a philosopher of the MAdhyamika school of Buddhism of the early fourth century, with N[^]anda.* Further, Asahga, a Buddhist philosopher of the Yogachara school, belonging to the fifth century,[^] is said to have spent here twelve years of his later life and to have been succeeded by his still more famous brother, Vasubandhu, as the high Priest of Nalanda,[^]

■Under the Guptas.— These statements of Taranatha would lead one to believe that Nalanda was a famous centre of Buddhism already at the time of [^]Nagaijuna and continued to be so in the following centuries. But it may be emphasized that the excavations have not revealed anything which suggests the occupation of the site before the Guptas, the earliest datable finds being a (forged) copper-plate of Samudragupta and a coin of Kunwagupta. This is fully confirmed by the statement of Hiuen Tsang that ‘a former king of the coimtry named Sakraditya selected by augury a lucky spot’ and built here a monastery and that his successors, Buddhagupta, Tathagatagupta, Baiaditya

[^] Schiefher, op. cU., pp. 69 ff.

* Ibid.t p. 83.

« Some scholars m in favour of a date earlier by a century.

* Schiefncr, op. cit., p. 122. [^] w[^]uiuiy.

and Vajra built some monasteries near by.’* As some of these names were borne by the Gupta emperors, it has been held that all of them refer to the Imperial Guptas of the fifth and sixth centuries.

The assumption that the monasteries of Nalanda were the creation of the Gupta emperors beginning with Kumaragupta I receives confirmation from the fact that Fi-hien, the Chinese pilgrim of the early fifth century, does not mention the monastic establishments of Nalanda. He speaks of the village of Nalo, the place of birth and death of Sariputra, and of a stupa existing here.[®] As has been suggested above (p. 3), this place may be identical with Nalanda, but the absence of any other monument except a stupa at the time of Fi-hien is significant.

Under Harsha. —Hiuen Tsang saw here an 80-ft. high copper image of Buddha raised by Purnavarman, ‘the last of the race of Aśoka-[^]raja,’* belonging to the early sixth century. And the illustrious Harshavardhana of Kanauj (606-647) no doubt greatly helped the institution by his munificence: he built a monastery of brass, which was under construction when Hiuen Tsang visited the place. The biographer of Hiuen Tsang says that Harsha remitted ‘the revenues of about a hundred villages as an endowment of the convent

[^] For Hiuen Tsang’s description of Nalanda, see Beal, op. cit., p. 167 ff. His biographer Hwui Li adds some interesting details: Beal, Life of Hiuen Tsang (London, 1911), pp. 109 ff.

*Lcg[^] Travels of Fa-hien (Oxford, 1886), p. 81.

*Beal, Records, II, p. 118.

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and two hundred householders in these villages contributed the required amount of rice, butter and milk/ ‘Hence,* he adds, ‘the students here, being so abundantly supplied, do not require to ask for the four requisites. This is the source of the perfection of their studies, to which they have arrived.’ This statement makes it clear that the students did not have to beg for their daily food.

Harsha highly revered the Nalanda monks and called himself their servant.[^] About a thousand monks of Nalanda were present at the royal congregation at Kanauj. Royal patronage was, therefore, the keynote of the prosperity and efficiency of Nalanda. As Hiuen Tsang says, *A long succession of kings continued the work of building, using all the skill of the sculptor, till the whole is truly marvellous to behold.**

Hiuen Tsang. —Hiuen Tsang also recounts a few of the monasteries and temples

that he saw here, giving their directions in most cases. Thus, the monastery built by Buddhagupta was to the south of the one built by his father Sakraditya; to the east of Buddhagupta's monastery was the one of Tathagatagupta; the one built by Baladitya was to the north-east of the last; while Vajra's monastery was to the west. After this an unnamed king of mid-India is said to have built a great monastery to the north and erected a high wall with one gate round these edifices. Hiuen Tsang also

1 Beal, Lift, p. 160. 177.

gives a long list of the other monasteries and stupas that he found. Modern attempts to identify them with the existing ruins have met with scanty success, as the six centuries that separated Hiuen Tsang and the final desertion of the site must have produced many new buildings and modified the existing ones.

Hiuen Tsang was very warmly received at N^{al}anda and resided here for a long time. The courses of study, says Hiuen Tsang, included the scriptures of the Mahayana and Hinayana schools, hetu-vidya (logic) iabda-vidyd (grammar) and chikitsd-vidya (medicine), as well as such purely Br5.hmanical texts as the Vedas including the Atkarva-veda. From the accounts of the pilgrim it is clear that Nalanda was bustling with literary activities:

‘The priests to the number of several thousands are men of the highest ability and talent. Their distinction is very great at the present time, and there are many hundreds whose fame has rapidly spread through distant regions. Their conduct is pure and unblamable. They follow in sincerity the precepts of the moral law. The rules of the convent arc severe, and all the priests are bound to observe them. The countries of India respect them and follow them. The day is not sufficient for asking and answering profound questions. From morning till night they engage in discussion; the old and the young mutually help one another. Those who caimot discuss questions out of the Tripitaka are little esteemed

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and are obliged to hide themselves for shame. Learned men from different cities, on this account, who desire to acquire quickly a renown in discussion, come here in multitudes to settle their doubts, and then the streams (of their wisdom) spread far and wide. For this reason some persons usurp the name (of Nalanda students), and in going to and fro receive honour in consequence. If men of other

quarters desire to enter and take part in the discussions, the keeper of the gate proposes some hard questions; many are unable to answer, and retire. One must have studied deeply both old and new (books) before getting admission. Those students, therefore, who come here as strangers, have to show their ability by hard discussion; those who fail compared with those who succeed are seven or eight to ten.*

Hiuen Tsang received here the Indian name Mokshadeva and was remembered by the inmates of the Nalanda monastery long after he had left the place. Several years after his return to China, Prajnadeva, a monk of N[^]alanda, sent him a pair of clothes, saying that the worshippers every day went on offering to Hiuen Tsang their bows and salutations.

Nalanda had by now acquired a celebrity spread all over the east a[^]a centre of Buddhist theology and educational activities. This is evident from the fact that within a short period of thirty years following Hiuen Tsang's departure, no le[^] than eleven Chinese

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and Korean travellers are known to have visited Nalanda.[^]

I-TSiNG. —[^]Next in importance to Hiuen Tsang stands I-tsing, who reached India in 673 and studied at Nalanda for a considerable time. His work records very minute details about the life led by the Nalandi monks, which he regarded as the ideal to be followed by the Buddhists all over the world. He says that the number of monks of the Nalanda monastery exceeded three thousand in number, maintained by more than two hundred villages bestowed by previous kings.[®] He also gives details of the curriculum, which, besides the Buddhist scriptures, included logic, metaphysics and a very extensive study of Sanskrit grammar.[®] He further testifies to the strict rules of discipline that the monks observed, their daily life being regulated by a waterclock.*

Under the Palas, —[^]The P[^]a emperors held east India from the eighth to the twelfth century a.d. and were noted for their patronage of Mahayana Buddhism. At the same time they established other monasteries at

[^] For a list, see Beal, *Life*, pp. xxviii ft

*J, Takakusu, *A Record of the Buddhist Religion* (Oxford, 1896), pp. 65 and 154.

•Takakusu, op. dl., pp. 167 ff. It appears from ^ account that all the existing grammatical texts of the Paninian school, including the Askfddhydyi itself, were taught to the students. It is strange that in spite of this many Buddhist texts in Sanskrit arc written in incorrect language.

^Ibid., p. 145.

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Vikramaiila, Somapura, Odantapuri and Jagaddala,^ which must have created a diversion in the activities of Buddhist scholars. It is even stated by Taranatha that the head of the Vikramaiila monastery had control over Nalanda.* Still, there are ample epigraphic and literary evidences to show that the PaJas continued to be liberal in their munificence to Nalanda.

Renowned scholars. —Mention may here be made of some famous scholars who, by their deep learning and excellence of conduct, created and maintained the dignity which Nalanda enjoyed. It has been already stated above that the early Mahayana philosophers, Nagarjuna, Aryadeva, Asanga and Vasubandhu, were all, according to Taranatha, the high-priests {partita) of Nalanda. Next in point of chronology comes DinnSga, the founder of the medieval school of logic; he was a southerner who was invited to Nalanda to defeat in disputation a Br^manist scholar and received the title tarka-pu^ava.^ The next famous pandita was Dharmapala, who had retired just before Hiuen Tsang

^ Vikramaiila was founded by Dharmapala (Schiefner, op. cit., p. 217) and is generally identified with Patharghata in Bhagalpur District, Bihar. The Somapura monastery was, according to Taranatha {ibid., p. 209), founded by Dharmapala^s successor Devapala and has been identified with Paharpur in Rajshahi District, East Bengal. According to inscriptions found there the monastery was named after Dharmapala. Odantapuri or Uddandapura was erected near Nalanda by either Gopala or Devapala (ibid., pp. 204 and 206), and may be identified with modem Bihar in Patna District. J^addala was founded by Kampala, one of the last kings of the dynasty, somewhere in north Bengal.

* Schiefniicr, op. cit., p. 218.

* Ibid., pp. 131 ff.

arrived. At the time of the pilgrim the head of the monastery was Silabhadra,

under whom the pilgrim studied and whose scholarship and personal qualities he describes eloquently. Silabhadra was probably succeeded by Dharmakirti, who is credited by Taranatha to have defeated a Brahmanical philosopher, Kumaralila.[^]

The next important figure was Santarakshita, who was invited by king Khri-sron-deu-tsan to Tibet, where he lived for many years till his death in 762. About the same time Tibet was also visited by Padmasambhava, who acquired great fame as the founder of the institution of Lamaism in Tibet. It was no mean honour for Nalanda that one of its scholars gave to the Tibetan religion a form that is continuing to the present day.

Thus, Nalanda succeeded in attracting the best Buddhist scholars whose fame spread to distant countries and persisted through ages. Rightly has it been said that *a detailed history of Nalanda would be a history of Mahayanist Buddhism.*

Epigraphic and literary references. —The following epigraphic and literary evidences help in the reconstruction of the history of Nalanda.

(1) Inscription on an image found at Shahpur (near Bihar-Sharif) of the Harsha year 66 (a.d. 672-73),

‘The identification with the famous BrShmana mImSmsaka Kumarila is at once suggested but docs not seem to be very likely, as Kumarila probably lived somewhat later.

* ETuyclopaedia of Religion and EthicSt IX (Edinbujgh, 1917), s. V. NSUandi.

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belonging to the reign of Adityasena and recording the erection of the image at

(2) Copper-plate of Devapala [circa 810-850) issued from Mudgagin (Monghyr), It records that being requested by the Maharaja Balaputradeva of Suvarnavipa (Sumatra) through a messenger, Devapala granted five villages in the district of Raj agriha in the Srinagara (Patna) division for the upkeep and maintenance of monks and copying of manuscripts in the monastery built by the Sumatran king, on the twentyfirst day of Karttika in the ihirtyninth regnal year. It was found in Monastery Site 1 and is now in the Indian Museum.[^]

(3) Inscription on a Tara image found at Hilsa (Patna District) of the thirtyfifth year of Devapala. It mentions Manju[^]rideva, a monk of Nalanda.[®]

(4) Inscription foimd at Ghosrawan (Patna District) belonging to the rule of Devapala and recording the activities of a monk named Viradeva, who was appointed by Devapala to look after Nalanda.[^]

(5) Pillar-inscription in a Jaina temple in the Bargaon village (Nalanda) of the twentyfourth year of Rajyapala [circa 908-35].**

(6) Vagi[^]vari image-inscription found at Nalanda by Cunningham in 1862. It records the erection of

[^]J. F. Fleet, Gupta Inscr[^]tions, Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum (Calcutta, 1888), p. 208. The image is now lost. It is probable diat the word was makSoihSra,

[^]Epigraphia Indka, XVII (1923-24), pp. 310 ff.

*JouT. Bihar and Orissa Ras. Soc.[^] X (1924), pp. 31 ff.

*A. K. Maitra, Gaudalekhamala (Rajshahi, 1913), pp, 45 ff.

* Indian Antiquary[^] XLVII (1918), pp. 110 ff.

the image in the first year of Gopala II (accession cira 935).[^]

(7) Nepal manuscript of the AshUisdhasrikd-inajndpdramiid copied at Nalanda in the sixth yearof Mahipala I [circa 988-1038).²

(8) Nalanda stone inscription, found in 1863, of the eleventh year of Mahipala I. It refers to the destruction of Nalanda by fire and its subsequent restoration.[®]

(9) Bodleian Library manuscript of the Ashtasdhasrikd-prajndpdramitd copied at Nalanda in the rule of Ramapala (1077-1120).*

(10) The Royal Asiatic Society manuscript of the same text, copied in the rule of Govindapala in the latter half of the twelfth century.’[®]

End of Nalanda.— It is impossible to give a separate account of the end of

Nalanda: it only forms a chapter of the history of the disappearance of Buddhism from India.

It is evident from the account of Hiuen Tsang that Buddhism was slowly decaying when he visited India. Important centres of early Buddhism were deserted, though some new centres, such as Nalanda in the east, Valabhi in the west and Kanauj in the south, had sprung up. After some time Buddhism lost its hold

^ Maitra, op. cit. pp. 86 ff.

* Proc. Asiatic Soc. Bengal 1899, pp. 69 ff.

* Maitra, op. cit. pp. 101 ff. etc.

* Catalogue of Sanskrit MSS. in the Bodleian Library, II (Oxford, 1905), p. 250. « „

* J. N. Roy. Asiatic Soc., N. S., 1876, p. 3.

in other provinces and flourished only in Bihar and Bengal, where royal patronage succeeded in keeping alive a dying cause.' But it is clear that Buddhism was no longer popular and centred round a few monasteries. The Buddhism that was practised at these places was no longer of the simple Hinayana type, nor even had much in common with the Mahayana of the earlier days, but was strongly imbued with ideas of Tantricism, inculcating belief in the efficacy of charms and spells and involving secret practices and rituals.

The crushes of the Brahmanical philosophers and preachers such as Kumarila and Shankaracharya in the past must have been another potent factor in rendering Buddhism unpopular. The final blow was delivered by the Muslim invaders, who, according to their own accounts, drove away the monks and destroyed their cloisters. Cut off from and divorced of the support of a laity which had been its greatest strength in early days, Buddhism virtually disappeared from India with this onslaught.

The Muslim historian Minhaj describes how Muhammad Bakhtiyar Khilji (end of twelfth century) fell upon and destroyed a city in western Bihar, which they called Bihar (Sanskrit vihara) and which was found to be a place of study.^ It is

not unlikely that Nalanda is being referred to here. Taxanatha[^] Aat ‘the whole of JMagadha and destroyccl_ many _monastcries; a[^] Nalanda“they did much dan[^]c and the monks fled abroad.[^]

I tr. H. G. Raverty (Calcutta, 1881). p. 552.

* Schicfiicr, op. a<., p. 94.

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The sumincr of 1235 [^] saw pother attack on NSlanda, at that time with only two surviving monastmes inhabited by some seventy monks, including a Tibetan Dharmasvamin, who has left an eye-witness account of the incident.[^]

Another Tibetan text, the Pag-sam jon~[^]ang, however, adds that after the raid of the Turks the temples and chaityas were repaired by a sage, Muditabhadra. ‘Soon after this, Kukutasiddha, minister of the king of Magadha, erected a temple at Nalanda, and while a religious sermon was being delivered there, two very indignant Tirthika (Brahmanical) mendicants appeared. Some naughty young novice-monks in disdain threw washing water on them. This made them very angry. After propitiating the sun for twelve years, they performed a yajna, fire-sacrifice, and threw living embers and ashes from the sacrificial pit into the Buddhist temples, etc. This produced a great conflagration which consumed Ratnodadhi,’[^] one of the libraries of Nalanda.

The first European account of the village Bargaon containing the ruins of Nalanda was given by Buchanon-Hamilton, who visited the place in the first quarter of the nineteenth century and found here some Brahmanical and Buddhist images.[^] But it was only in the sixties of that century that Alexander Cunningham identified the place with the ancient Nalanda on the

[^] Biograpf[^] of Dharmasodmin[^] cd. G. Roerick and A. S. Altckar {Patna, 1959), pp. xix if.

* S. C. Vidyabhusana, History of Indian Logic (Calcutta, 1921), p. 516.

• Martin, Eastern India, I (London, 1838), pp. 94 ff.

basis of the distances and directions given by the Chinese pilgrims and of some

image-inscriptions that he found here.

In fact, it was he who drew the attention of the archaeological world to the importance of this site.¹ After a few years A. M. Broadley carried out some unsystematic excavation in Chaitya Site 12 and published a monograph on the place.²

For about twenty years beginning with 1915-16, the Archaeological Survey of India, excavated [the site]. The activities of the Survey in the direction of excavation, preservation of the remains from further ruin and collection of antiquities have resulted in making Nalanda a place which no archaeological pilgrim should leave unseen.

3. THE REMAINS

The approach-road to the excavated site (pi. IX) leads through an old passage between the side-walls of Monastery Site 1 on the left and Monastery Sites 4 and 5 on the right. On entering through the eastern gate of this passage, the visitor will proceed westward till he finds the open space between the row of temples on the west and that of the monasteries on the east. Since the Main Temple standing at the southern extremity of the row of temples is at once the largest and most imposing structure, we shall begin our description with this monument.

* Archaeological Survey of India, I (Simla, 1871), pp. 28 ff.

* Huins of the Nalanda Monasteries at Bimgarh (Calcutta, 1872).

Main Temple Site 3.—This temple (pi. I) is a huge solid structure standing in the middle of a court surrounded by a number of small votive stupas, many of which were twice or even three times built one over the other on the same spot. In the course of excavations it was found that the very small original structure was enlarged by later temples built over and around the ruins of the earlier ones, the present mound being the result of seven successive accumulations. The first three of these structures were found buried deep in the interior of the mound. They were all under 3.50 m. square; and owing to the shattered condition of the later remains over them, it was found necessary to cover them up again. The four later integuments which can be examined on the spot were much more extensive structures. The three different staircases that can be seen to the north belong to the fifth, sixth and seventh periods respectively, the last two originally covering up the earlier one. The fifth of these successively-built temples is the most

interesting and the best preserved. It had four corner-towers, of which three have been exposed, and was decorated with rows of niches containing well-modelled stucco figures of Buddha and the Bodhisattvas on these towers as well as on the sides of the staircase. The votive stupas sometimes contain in their core bricks inscribed with sacred Buddhist texts. The inscriptions belong to the sixth century A.D., so that it is possible to ascribe the fifth temple to that period. The same period is indicated by the stucco figures, which are fine specimens of Gupta art. Considering the huge accumulations over which

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the fifth temple was built, it seems that the foundation of the original structure must have been laid at least two centuries earlier.

All the later additions followed the square plan of the original structure and in each case a square framework of encasing walls was built on each side with a view to giving suitable support to the additional brickwork to be erected, the casing being filled up with earth and debris to form a solid core for the enlarged structure. As the structure increased in size with each addition, the level of the court gradually rose, and many small votive stupas are found at several places completely or partially buried under the different floors and walls that have been exposed.

The shrine-chamber on the top, facing north, can be approached by the staircase of the sixth period. It presumably contained a colossal image of Buddha, as the pedestal therein would indicate.

Monastery Sites 1A and 1B.—To the east of the Main Temple and on a higher level are the remains of two monasteries (pi. II), having their entrances to the north and facing a brick-paved court, the level of which almost coincides with the concrete pavement seen in front of the staircase of the fifth level of the Main Temple. The buildings are provided on all the four sides with small cells each having an entrance facing the concrete-paved verandah, the roof of which was supported by pillars, as can be guessed from the stone column-bases provided at regular intervals on the verandah-parapet which encloses the brick-paved

court in the middle of the buildings. The shrine-chamber of each of the monasteries is situated in the middle of the south row of cells, facing the

entrance gate. A flight of concrete-paved steps at the north-east corner of the building suggests the previous existence of an upper storey for each of the monasteries. In Monastery Site IB there is an octagonal well at the north-west corner of the brick-paved court, while traces of a raised platform or pulpit built against the parapetwall can be seen at the south end of this court.

A pit sunk on one side of the court of each of the monasteries revealed the existence of an earlier court somewhat below the upper one, indicating that these two monasteries were built directly over the ruins of earlier buildings on the same spot.

Monastery Site 1. —We now come to Monastery Site 1, the most important of the monastery-group, lying to the north-east of Site IA (pi. II). Here there are as many as nine levels, each of which is indicated by concrete pavements and superimposed walls and drains.

The main entrance lies in the west wall through a large portico, of which the roof rested on pillars, the stone bases of the latter being still in situ. At a later period this portico was converted into a porch with an antechamber by the addition of two walls, which narrowed down the entrance to less than 2 m. Flanking this door there existed stucco figures which, having been badly damaged by fire in ancient days, fell to pieces as soon as they were exposed. Effects of this

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fire are still visible on the western walls. Stucco figures also existed in the large niches in the north and south walls of the portico. One of these niches is now filled up, while the other shows the lower part of an image, which, it will be seen, also bears marks of damage by fire.

The lower monastery, of which the cells are seen near the entrance on the western and along the southern and eastern sides, is believed to have been constructed in the reign of Devapala, the third king of the Pala dynasty (circa 810-50), by a king of Sumatra, as is stated in a copper-plate inscription found in the north-west corner of the entrance.

The monastery consists, as usual, of a number of monks' cells with wide verandahs in front, originally set round an open quadrangular court, but later on separated from it by a high wall. It was originally a building of two, or probably more, storeys, as is apparent from the existence of stairs in the south-east corner.

Many of the cells have been excavated and have revealed the existence of a still earlier monastery underneath, as indicated by concrete pavements. A rough structure over the fine brickwork of the lower cell belongs to a later period, when the foundations were built over the remains of the ruined earlier walls below. These upper walls, it will be seen, project beyond the lower ones at places, but the projection is not uniform. The explanation is that at the time of the construction of the later monastery the whole space forming the earlier verandah was filled with the fallen debris of the upper storeys of the earlier monastery, and therefore

THE REMAINS

it made no difference whether the foundation of the new walls rested on the remains of the old walls or on the hard surface of the hard debris. The concrete lintels and beams supporting the projecting portions of the later structure above the lower rows of cells have all been inserted in order to preserve and exhibit the remains exactly as they were found.

The main shrine of the lower monastery is situated in the middle of the east side and originally contained a colossal figure of seated Buddha, of which indications of the crossed legs and drapery still exist. As has been said above, the high wall standing all round on the parapet between the courtyard and the verandah is a later addition, so that the devout worshipper could see the image from the courtyard and the entrance of the monastery.

The platform with a number of stone columnbases in front of the shrine on the other side of the later high wall might have been used by the teacher to address students seated in the courtyard. The solid oblong shrine in the middle of the courtyard is a later structure which is now supported for the lower 2 m. or so by modern brickwork. The slightly tilted stairs show the height to which the level had risen when the chaitya was constructed. The small square chapel to the south-west of the shrine is, on the other hand, an earlier structure and the carving with scroll-work and dwarfed flying figures on the stone, originally belonging to some other temple, may be ascribed to the Gupta period.

Between the floors of the cells of the lower and

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upper monastery there is a difference of nearly 4 m. The central court was

cleared by the later builders to obtain access to the old well in the north-west corner, and a wide staircase was built against the later high wall mentioned above to lead down to the well. At the same time two adjacent rooms were constructed against the high northern wall. These chambers have corbelled entrances facing south and vaulted roofs. The purpose of the rooms is not apparent, as nothing was found inside them. The front verandah, however, yielded several sculptured fragments of some interest, which included a remarkable plaque of fine-grained stone representing the eight principal events in the life of Buddha.

Later, when the upper monastery also fell into ruins, the level of the courtyard rose to within a couple of feet of the verandah and the cell-floors of the latest monastery to be erected on the site; and the whole of the courtyard was concreted. Three successive layers of this concrete have been uncovered and preserved in the south-west corner of the court.

The cells of the upper-level monastery are built with recesses to contain beds for the monks, a feature ■ which is absent in the earlier monasteries. Indications of the drains constructed one upon the other in different periods may be seen at the north-east corner of the monastery.

At the western corner of the northern verandah of the monastery was found a damaged copper-plate inscription of Dharmapaia {circa 770-810), the predecessor of Devapala, and close to it another one, probably

spurious, of Samudragupta of the Gupta dynasty {circa 335-75). The broad flight of stairs with concretepaved steps, seen outside the monastery at its western front, led to the highest level of the monastery and therefore belongs to the latest period.

Monastery Site 4.—Monastery Site 4 lies to the north of Monastery Site 1 and is adjacent to it. Its northern half was excavated right down to the lowest level of occupation and an earlier monastery was thus brought to light. That the upper monastery did not form the first floor of the lower monastery is evident from the existence of the main shrine in the centre of the eastern row of cells, situated exactly upon the earlier shrine, from the existence of a drain in the north-east corner of the upper court, carrying the sewage through the verandah parapet and right through the front and back walls of a cell in the upper monastery, and from the well to be seen in the courtyard of the upper level.

The platform in front of the shrine in the east (upper monastery) apparently supported a portico. The stones placed at regular intervals on the parapets of the verandah served as the bases of pillars supporting the original verandah-roof.

That the lower monastery too was double-storeyed is certain from the fact that in the south-west corner we find a staircase on which a flight of stairs of the later period was superimposed. An interesting architectural feature here is the remnant of an old skylight above the lower landing of the earlier stairs.

Near the north end of the eastern verandah of the lower monastery was found a coin of Kumaragupta {circa 413-55) of the archer type, which is one of the earliest finds recovered at Nalanda. Traces of the destruction of the lower monastery by fire exist in the burnt wooden door-frames and mud-mortar on the face of the walls.

Monastery Annexe Site 5.—Through a cell in the south-east corner of the upper monastery in Site 4 we descend by a large staircase built on the south verandah to an earlier monastery (Site 5), of which a few cells on the northern and southern sides and all the cells on the eastern side have been exposed and conserved. A feature of this monastery is that there are two rows of cells, one behind the other, the cells in the front row communicating with each other through corbelled doorways. The cells of the back row, it is noticeable, have no entrance. Probably such entrances as had existed at first were blocked up later on, though it must be admitted that no such traces are visible now.

From this area a clay mould of Gupta coins was discovered.

Monastery Site 6- —^The visitor may now return to the open space in front of the row of monasteries and proceed northward till Monastery Site 6 is reached. This monastery, it will be observed, contains two brick-paved courts, the lower one belonging to the earlier monastery which had existed on the site before

THE REMAINS

the upper one was built on its ruins. A feature of interest here is the two sets of double ovens in the upper courtyard which the monks might have used for cooking or for some practical demonstration to students. The ovens had no drains, tlic two that may now be seen having been provided for their proper preservation.

This monastery, like the ones already seen, contained in the courtyard its own well, belonging to both the periods of its occupation. A staircase to be seen in the south-west corner shows that the building was at least double-storeyed. There are two shrines in the lower courtyard and one in the upper.

Monastery Site 7. —Separated from Monastery Site 6 by a passage is Monastery Site 7. Here three successive monasteries were built on the same site, each upon the ruins of a previous one on a similar plan. The site has been so excavated as to indicate very clearly the three periods of occupation, the court, verandah and the cells of the three successive periods being easily distinguishable. The parapet round the verandah supported pillars on which rested the roof and of which the square bases are visible in all the three different levels. The cells of the first and second periods can be recognized by their doorways blocked up by bricks. The upper courts are concrete-paved, while the lower one is brick-paved and contains an oven and a shrine with stairs facing west. In the portion that has been fully exposed down to the depth of the first period, i.e. the southern half of the monastery, no well has been found, though it is not

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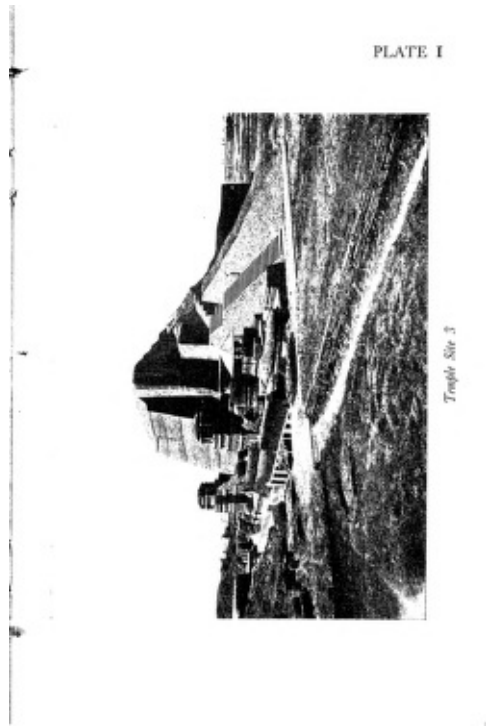
unlikely that one might exist in the unexposed northern half.

Monastery Site 8.—The arrangements of this monastery with its verandah, cells, courtyard, shrine, etc., are similar to those that we have already met with. Two different levels of occupation may be distinguished by the usual indications. The lintel of the doorway of a cell in the south-east corner, which was the only one found in this monastery preserved to its original height, has been repaired; as the original wooden lintels were not found, three concrete lintels have been inserted to support the superstructure which is decorated with a pretty dentil cornice just a few inches above the cornice. This treatment of a doorway is unique at Nalanda. The shrine is spacious and imposing with a wide court in front. There are two levels visible in it.

Monastery Site 9.—Here the open space at the north end of the western verandah was blocked up subsequently to form a separate cell, which was provided with a small corbelled door, about 2 m. high. The corbelling seems to have replaced a flat rough filling, of which evidences were found during the excavations. The earlier drain which was covered up with small stone slabs, originated from the north-east corner of the court and ran through the whole

breadth of the eastern verandah out into the open space to the east of the building. The later drain, originating at the north-east corner and having its bed connected with

PLATE I



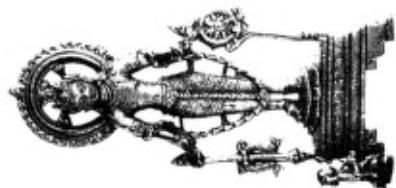
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PLATE II



Monastery River 1 and 1.1

PLATE III



B. Tirdpa (house)



A. Buddha in abhaya-mudra (house)

^ V t. 1.4 k.

'««. Jn

PLATE IV



Asotakishnare attended by Tārā and Bīrāṅgā (stone)

If 1

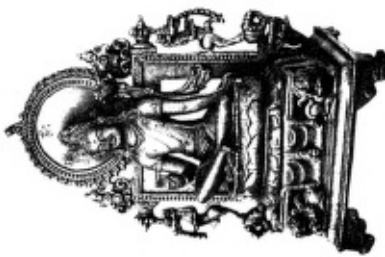
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Khasarpam {sloiie}



B. Padmaparyi (kwanzi)



A. Padmaparyi (kwanzi)

A. Pftdmapdni (sloiiif) B. Padmnftdni {brmzf}

PLATE VII



*Eighteen-armed goddess, probably Prajñāpāramitā
preaching Law (bronze)*

Eighteen-armed goddess, probably Prajñāpāramitā preaching Law (bronze)

PLATE VIII



B. Four-armed goddess (stone)



A. Vajrayāna (?) (stone)

the level of the earlier one, projects diagonally into the court for a length of

about 28 ft. It appears that this projection was provided at a later date when, due to some cause or other, a portion of the courtyard was blocked up, rendering the original drain useless. There are six ovens in the courtyard, and traces of another one near the middle of the northern verandah of this monastery. At the south-west corner there is a staircase with a skylight, similar to that in Monastery Site 4. Charred layers of wood were found on the steps of the staircase, showing that they had originally been built of wooden sleepers which were subsequently destroyed by fire.

Monastery Site 10.—An interesting feature of Monastery Site 10 is that the doors had arches, set in mud-mortar, instead of wooden lintels. Traces of these arches may still be seen at the south-west and north-east corners of the building. Another feature of interest in this building is that the outer facade of its eastern external wall was provided with a door-opening at the northern and southern ends for facility of communication from the back of the building. These doors were subsequently blocked up. There is no well in the courtyard.

Monastery Site 11.—Lying near cultivated fields. Monastery Site 11 was exposed in a very badly damaged condition, the entire northern half of the building having been levelled to the ground. A feature of the monastery is the presence of no less than twenty-five fragmentary

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stone pillars, some of which are still standing on their bases on the parapet-walls of the verandah at regular intervals of about 1 m. To judge from the nearly-complete specimens, their height seems to have been over 2 m. The capitals surmounting the pillars are, however, missing. The height of the roofs of the verandah and the cells may be guessed from these pillars as well from the few beam-holes seen at the south-west corner of the building. As usual, there is a staircase in the south-west corner with an opening in the wall to admit light. The discovery of a few broken jars containing quantities of dried-up mortar and the cistern-like arrangement of one of the cells situated towards the west end of the south row is significant.

General remarks about the monasteries. -The visitor has now seen all the excavated monasteries and will have marked that all of them are very similar in lay-out and general appearance. As one goes in by the entrance, one finds on one side a secret chamber, access to which was provided by a very narrow and low

opening in the wall of the cell in front of it. This inner room was probably used for purposes of storing the valuables of the monastery received as endowments from the public. There was a verandah, the roof of which rested on stone pillars; on one side of it was a courtyard open to the sky and on the other row of cells. The central cell just facing the entrance beyond the courtyard contained a shrine with an image which, because of its prominent position, was the first thing to catch the eye as one entered the monastery.

The courtyard too usually contained a shrine of large dimensions. The walls were all plastered thickly, traces of the plaster being seen here and there in every building.

There are abundant signs left in the ruins of burnt wooden beams, doors, images, grains, etc., to prove that there was a general outbreak of fire at Nalanda & at least once, from which all the buildings existing at that time suffered more or less. The students and monks must have fled away in panic, leaving all their properties behind. The site of the mahavihara however, was not abandoned and the people soon after this returned to the old centre of learning.

Every monastery was thus deserted and reoccupied, mention having been already made (p. 19) of nine different levels in Monastery Site 1, which is therefore a very complicated structure. In all the other monasteries there are two or three levels, indicating as many periods of occupation. The subsequent builders did not generally disturb the old plan: they built on the remains of the older structure, using its old walls and hard debris as the foundation for the new walls.

Except Monastery Sites 1A and 1B, which had a different orientation, all the monasteries faced west, had drains discharging the sewage in the east and staircases in the south-west corner of the building. They were separated from each other by a passage running east to west.

The row of monasteries faced the row of temples, situated to the east, an open space being left between

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the two rows. The space, however, was not left entirely vacant, as is shown by a few brick structures here and there. To this row of temples we turn again.

Temple Site 12.—We have already described (p. 17) the Main Temple, the most imposing of the NAlanda monuments, and now proceed to the temple to its north, Temple Site 12. This structure broadly represents two different periods of construction, a later temple having been erected directly upon the ruins of an earlier one. The external facade of the earlier structure was decorated throughout with projecting niches and pilasters of various patterns, though few of the niches now contain images, the profuseness of which lends so much attraction to the Main Temple. The outer plan of this temple is almost square, the dimensions being roughly 52 by 50 m. The later structure built upon the earlier one is also square on plan, but its facades, unlike those of the lower structure, are plain. The chaitya has an oblong projection at each of the four corners to accommodate four small shrines and shows a broad flight of steps in the middle of the eastern front. The outer walls of the main shrine-chamber and those of the small shrines situated in the corners are decorated with niches many of which have stucco images similar to those seen in the fifth level of the Main Temple. The main shrine-chamber of the upper level faces east. The forecourt at the south-east corner of the chaitya is studded with votive stupas of different sizes, such as are noticed round the Main Temple. The chaitya, again, seems to have been pro

tected in the southern, western and northern directions by a long continuous compound-wall. In the seventies of the last century Broadley partially excavated this site

(p. 16).

To the north and south of the temple are two brick shrines, each containing traces of a colossal stucco statue of Buddha in bhwnispaTia-mudra or earth-touching pose, i.e. the right hand touching the ground, the palm turned inwards.

Temple Site 13.—To the north of Temple Site 12 stands in the same row another structure, Temple Site 13, now almost in ruins. Portions of the external wall of this structure indicate two different periods of construction. The earlier external walls, though much dilapidated, still retain evidences to show that they were provided with beautiful niches, pilasters, etc., similar to those found in Temple Site 12. The later walls are, however, plain wherever they exist.

To the east of the chaitya there is a large forecourt originally concrete-paved, on which a few fragmentary votive stupas are still standing. In the middle of the court there is a portico approached by a flight of steps. The shrine is still existing

above and bears traces of a colossal stucco image of Buddha. The walls of the shrine-chamber are built in two sections, the outer one still retaining portions of the original moulding work. The concrete floor of the circumambulation-path surrounding the shrine-chamber is now practically ruined.

The most interesting feature of this site is a brick

made smelting furnace situated to the north of the main structure. The furnace is made of four chambers in one square divided by short walls, each of the chambers being provided with two flues for the fire to burn and air to pass. The discovery of burnt metal pieces, slag of metal and other similar objects from the furnace tends to show that it was used for casting metal objects.

Temple Site 14.—To the north of Temple Site 13 is another temple, Site 14, of the same dimensions and almost identical features. The outer walls show two periods of construction, plain walls having been erected at many places upon the earlier ones with beautiful mouldings. The doorway of the shrine-chamber was also narrowed down by the addition of blocks of brickwork. Inside the chamber is seen the interlocked legs and the head, the latter being less than 1m. high, of a colossal stucco image of Buddha.

A most interesting feature of the temple is the existence of painting in the niches of the pedestal of the image, the only extant specimen of mural painting at Nalanda. The specimens are, however, much too fragmentary and what now remains shows the figures of a deer and a lion.

Temple Site 2 .—A temple different in character and not conforming to the general lay-out of the remains is represented by Temple Site 2, situated to the northeast of Monastery Site 7 and approached by the narrow passage through Monastery Sites 7 and 8. Specially

THE REMAINS

interesting here is the dado of two hundred and eleven sculptured panels over the moulded plinth. These panels are symmetrically arranged, twenty appearing on each side of the main entrance and fiftyseven in each of the three remaining walls. The pilasters intervening between the panels are decorated with a pot-and-foilage design and are surmounted by arches, some of them being pointed. There is a large variety of scenes depicted on them: human figures in various attitudes; household scenes; kinnaras playing on musical instruments; Siva and Parvati

separately or together; Kirttikeya on his peacock; the gods Agni, Kubera and Gaja-Lakshmi; the child Gautama (?) with his writing material; scenes of archery; the Kachchhapa-Jdtaka; a human-headed bird with a foliated tail; maA^ra-designs; a snake-charmer; geometrical and scroll patterns, etc. The visitor will at once be reminded of the terracotta plaques that are arranged in rows on the different terraces of the huge temple at Paharpur in Rajshahi District of East Bengal. A striking similarity is noticeable in the subjects depicted and their arrangement and style of execution.

It has been suggested that the sculptures belong to the sixth or seventh century a.d. As the present temple seems to belong to a later date, it is likely that the sculptures originally belonged to an earlier temple and were utilized to decorate the present temple when it was built.

The row of panels is surmounted by two or, at some places, three cornices, which are also decorated at intervals with chaitj>a-moti£, birds, human heads,

etc. As one gets up by the staircase facing east, one finds oneself on a circumambulation-path, upon which rises a shrine showing two different stages of construction.

4. THE ENVIRONS OF THE SITE

Image of Buddha. —In an enclosure to the east of Chaity Site 14 is preserved a colossal stone image of seated Buddha.

Image of MarIchI. —^Another stone image, of Marichi, the Buddhist goddess of dawn, is seen at a distance of about 100 metres to the east of Temple Site 14. As is usual, one of three faces of the goddess is that of a pig and there are seven pigs represented on the pedestal. The local people worship the image as a Hindu deity.

Images at Baroaon. —In the village of Bargaon, to the north of the site of excavations, is a modern temple of Surya enshrining a very interesting collection of Brahmanical and Buddhist images. A beautiful image of P^ad, about 1J metres high, attracts attention by its beautiful features. In the rooms are found the images of Surya, Vishnu, Siva-Parvati, Avalokiteivara, etc. Near by is a big tank, sacred to Surya, on the eastern and northern banks of which are again found some Buddhist and Brahmanical gods, including mukha^lingas.

Remains at Begampur. —Between the villages of Bargaon and Begampur, further to the north, are found extensive mounds representing ancient buildings. They probably mark the northern extremity of the ancient establishments at N^{al}anda and give us an idea

of how extensive N^{al}anda was in the days of its glory. Surrounding this vast area on all sides there was a series of tanks, some of which still contain water.

Image at Jagadishpur.— At Jagadishpur, a village about 3 kilometres to the south-west of the excavations, is a colossal image of Buddha with a high back-slab. This attractive image shows Buddha seated under the Bodhitree, the attempts of Mara and his followers—the demons and alluring damsels—to distract Buddha from his austerities and their final retreat after defeat and humiliation; and other scenes of Buddha's life, including his parinirvana or death at the top of the back-slab.

The Archaeological Museum houses such portable antiquities as were discovered in the course of the excavations of the sites referred to above as well as the neighbouring site of Rajgir.

A. Sculptures

The pantheon. —By far the richest collection is that of stone and bronze images of gods and goddesses of the Buddhist and, in a few cases, of the Brahmanical pantheon. Very generally speaking, the images were found in abundance in the monasteries where they were worshipped and in all probability manufactured, while on the temple-sites miniature votive stupas brick slabs inscribed with sacred texts or tablets containing the Buddhist creed¹ were found. The images of Nalanda mostly date from the Pala period, though there are some notable specimens of the Gupta period (e.g., the stucco images in the walls of Temple Site 3). As Nalanda was the centre of the Tantra cult, it is only natural that along with Buddha and the Bodhisattvas, Tantric gods and goddesses were evolved and worshipped; this is confirmed by the recovered specimens. The P^{ala} school of art is seen at its best at Nalanda, and its influence radiated to the east and the

1 The following verse is referred to as the Buddhist creed: ye dJurma hetu¹rabhavd hetum Ushdm Tathagatc hy~a»adat Uskam cha yo nirodha evmh-vcdi Maha-srama¹jtiy ‘Tathagata has revealed the cause of those phenomena which proceed from a cause as well as (the means of) their prevention. So says

the Great Monk.*

Eastern Archipelago. Nepal and Tibet also closely followed the Buddhist pantheon that was sanctioned by the N^{alanda} monks, though the northern Buddhists created many more goods or modified the existing ones according to local tradition and fantasy.

The presence of not a negligible number of Brahmanical images at this centre of Buddhist theology and ritual is intriguing. Probably their introduction and existence were tolerated, but it must be remembered that this was the age when the Buddhists were conceiving and erecting such deities as Trailokyavijaya trampling on Siva and Parvati, Aparajita trampling on Gane^a and VidyujjvSlakarali whose vdhana (vehicle) consists of such mighty Brahmanical gods as Indra, Brahma, Vishnu and Siva and who carries the severed head of Brahma in one of her hands. It is no doubt true that there were mutual exchange and borrowing of deities, but it is not possible to think that the Brahmanical deities whose images we find at Nalanda, viz. Vishnu, Balarama, Siva-Parvati, Ganela, etc., were ever absorbed in the Buddhist pantheon.

Art. —Under the influence of Tantricism the Pala artist conceived and produced a much greater variety of images than his Gupta predecessor. With the extension of the pantheon there was also an increase in the number of poses of the hands (mudra) and posture of the feet [dsana). And simultaneously there was also an increased attention paid to the technical details.

The specimens of Nalanda were the work of many artists with a varying degree of skill and training. Not

all of them succeeded in reproducing the calm and contemplative expression that characterizes the Gupta images found at Sarnath and even the stucco figures of the Bodhisattvas in the niches of the Main Temple at Nalanda. True, the artist tried to reflect the inner meditation on the face of the god by such devices as half-open eyes, to show that the deity was wrapped up in meditation {dkydna or yoga)^ but this sometimes degraded into a matter of formality instead of producing the effect that it was intended to.

Considering the vastness of the Nalanda ruins, large stone statues, so common at Sarnath and elsewhere, are remarkably small in number at Nalanda. The Nalanda artist seems to have taken delight in modelling small pieces which afforded

ample scope for minute details and careful execution. This may be due to the fact that the major portion of the creative urge of the artist was directed to the production of bronze images, which, of necessity, could not be conceived and executed on a grand scale.¹ Metal-casting as a technique must have been highly developed at N^{al}anda, and it is probable that it even formed part of the curriculum.

Some of the Nalanda bronzes are carved in the round, but generally they are placed against a square back-slab rising up to the shoulders of the deity. There is often a circular or oval halo which is sometimes detachable. In some specimens the halo has completely lost its significance and has been reduced into a

1 There may have been exceptions, for HiuenTsang saw a 24-m. high copper image of standing Buddha at N^{al}anda.

Nalanda

decorated piece shaped like an elongated horseshoe, resting on the pedestal of the image itself and rising an inch or so above the image. The pedestal may consist of one or two lotuses, which again may rest on a throne. Sometimes the lotus-seat rests on two lions, suggesting a *sihhsotui* or *lion-throne. Both the male and female deities (with the exception of Buddha) wear elaborate ornaments of the usual type.

Buddha.— It is well-known that in early Buddhist art represented at Sanchi, Bharhut, Bodhi-Gaya, etc., Buddha was never portrayed in human form, his presence being indicated by a symbol or empty throne. Images of Buddha began to be erected about the first century A.D. in north-western India and Mathura, probably under foreign influence. Once the practice was started, it spread all over India in a short time, and in all centres of Buddhist art Buddha formed the most favourite subject of the artist. The Nalanda specimens depict the Master in all his characteristic attitudes: he may be standing, sitting in meditation under the Bodhi-tree or sitting with both legs pendent (*bhadrāsana*). The hands show the favourite poses, the earth-touching, meditation, gift, protection, preaching, argumenting. He is usually placed on a lotus-throne, which may be supported by lions as in no. 9-171. Usually the hair is shown in schematic curls with a top-knot (*ushnisha*)² regarded as one of the thirty-two marks of a great man; but in no. 1-456 Buddha is wearing a crown on his head. In one specimen, no. 1-152, Buddha has matted hair, a characteristic of Siva, the

locks hanging on shoulders. He is sometimes accompanied by attendants, e.g. no. 1-456, but is generally single. There are also sculptures depicting the scenes of his life. Thus, his birth is represented in no. 11-110, where Maya, his mother, is standing under a tree and a male deity to the right is receiving the newly-born baby. No. 1A-97 is a delicate carving in stone with the earthtouching Buddha in the centre, the scene of the temptation of Mara on the pedestal and seven other scenes around. The taming of the rogue elephant is the subject-matter of no. 1-457, while no. 3-272 depicts the death of the Master lying on a couch, two lamenting figures below and a stupa and musical instruments played by unseen hands above.

Mention may be made of a colossal statue of Buddha (removed from near Temple Site 14) seated in dharmachakra-mudra and attended by Vasumitra, Maitreyanatha, Sariputra and Maudgalyayana, specified by an inscription below each of them.

Particularly noteworthy are the figures of Buddha, nos. 1-532 and 9-150, standing on a circular lotuspedestal, the finest of Nalanda bronzes. The smiling but calm expression of the face and the arrangement of the drapery may be marked (pi. III A).

The Bodhisattvas. —Of the divine Bodhisattvas, Padmapani is represented in many images with or without the Dhyani-Buddha Amitabha on the crest. In no. 1-424 he is seated in lalitasana^ the right hand showing varada pose and the left holding a lotus-stalk. No. 1-631 may be regarded as another variety of the

same god, seated in mahardjalidsana with the right hand in vitarka-mudra and the left holding a lotus. There are two fine gilt specimens of Padmapani, nos. 1-961 and 8-7: the former has its right hand raised in abhaya-mudra (pi. VI B), while the latter has the Dhyani-Buddha with varada on the crest.^ There are three large stone images, nos. 3-54, 3-63 and 8-15, of the same god with the usual features. The first is seated in Idiidsana with a dwarfish male figure by the side of the god holding a sword in the right hand and a noose in the left (pi. VI A). No. 8-15 may particularly be notable for its fine execution.

A large four-armed Avalokitesvara in stone is seen in no. 12-87, the right hands with a rosary and varadamudra and the left ones a lotus-stalk and nectar-pot. There is a yakshi (female companion) on each side of the deity representing Bhrikuti and T^5. and a crouching animal praying for mercy (Suchimukha) on

the right half of the pedestal, which also contains a kneeling devotee (pi. IV).

No. 45-3847 is an image of Khasarpana-Loke[^]ara found in the compound of a local school. He is shown as standing and flanked by TSra and Sudhana-kumAra on his right and Hayagriva and Bhrikuti on the left (pi. V). Suchimukha is shown in his usual pose on the pedestal. The tall Bodhisattva (no. 51-3931), holding a lotus-stalk in the left hand and flanked by female figures, has the Dhyani-Buddha Vairochana on

1 This is uncanonical, as varada is the pose of Ratnasambhava, while Padmapam ought to carry Amitabha (with dhySna-mudra) on his crest

his crest and can probably be identified as Bodhisattva Samantabhadra.

No. 1A-10 is a stone image of Vajrapani in pratydlldha posture, holding a combined ghanid (bell) and vajra (thunder-bolt) in the left and vajra in the upraised right hands; serpents form the garland, pedestal and head-dress of the deity. An important specimen is no. 9-46, where the god is seated cross-legged with three heads and six arms, of which two hold the vajra against the breast and the others a rosary, arrow, bow and an invisible object. A female figure, representing the respective iaktiy is seated by the side of the god. The back is inscribed with the word Vairochana. No. 9-157 will easily attract the attention of the visitor by its perfectly-preserved gilt surface. It depicts a fourheaded god (Vajrasattva ?) seated cross-legged on a lion-throne, holding the vajra against the breast by both the hands. The high jfi//j-shaped crown is noteworthy.

Of the many images of Manjuiri mention may be made of nos. 9-112 and 1-620. The former represents a particular variety of the god known as Arapachana, seated cross-legged with a book held against the breast in the left hand and a brandishing sword in the right. There is a red stone in each of the four corners of the pedestal. In the latter the god is seated in lalitsana with a lotus-stalk in the left hand and a sword in the right. In both the images a scarf is wound round the waist and tied on the knee. In no. 1A-11 we find Manjuvara, another variant of Manju[^]ri, seated crosslegged with the hands placed in dharmachakra-mudrd and a book-on-lotus to the left. No 11-45 shows the

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same god seated on a lion, the left hand holding a lotus- 'i stalk and the right resting on the bent right knee.

No. 4-103 is a very doubtful representation of the god, who is depicted here as a corpulent figure, with a lemon in the right hand and a book in the left.[^] An inscription on the back shows that the image was erected in the reign of the Pala emperor Devapala.

Of the uncommon types of the Bodhisattvas mention may be made of no. 1-973 which shows a god seated in *lalitsana*, the right hand in *varadamita* and the left holding a banner.

Jambhala.— Jambhala, the Buddhist god of wealth, is represented in many images. No. 1-470 shows the god seated in *mahardja* holding a fruit and purse respectively in the hands. An inscription shows that it was the gift of the sage (jain) Keka. In no. 1-205 we find a four-handed variety of the god seated in *lalitsana*, the right hands holding a pot and sword and the left ones a flower and mongoose.

The right foot rests on overturned vases. The back of the image is inscribed with the letters *ja* and *kwh*.

No. 1-641 represents a scene suggesting a conference* of Jambhala seated in the middle of a circular lotusthrone with eight similar figures seated round him.

[^] E. J. Bernet Keropers identifies this image with Kumara.

77u Bronzes of Jalandar and Hindu-Japanese Art (Leiden, 1933), p. 31.

* Cf. Vajra-Tara in the Dacca Museum, in which each petal shows a companion-goddess, ancillary to the principal deity in the centre of the lotus. N. K. Bhattasali, *Iconography of Buddhist and Brahmanical Images in the Dacca Museum* (Dacca, 1929), p. 49. [^]

Other gods.—Of the images of other male gods, mention may be made of no. 1-224, a stone image of Trailokyavijaya, a Buddhist god trampling on the Brahmanical gods Siva and Parvati lying prostrate. The hands form what is known as *vajrahankara-mudra* and the face expresses rage. An inscription on the back reads:

*dharmalakṣaṇam sarva dharmāḥ cāpyalakṣaṇm [i*3] dharmasamatā yogat—sarva-dharmasamatā spṛktaḥ* - [«*] *Udayahdrasya* .

Trailokyavijaya is represented by another image, the lower part of which only has survived. It was removed from Monastery Site 1.

Another Tantric god, Yamantaka, is depicted in no. 1A-113. He is six-headed and six-armed and holds a vajray sword and pestle in the right hands and a noose, human head and cup of blood in the left. A garland of human skulls adorns the god and the Dhyani-Buddha Akshobhya appears on the crest.

An interesting image, no. 43-3843, representing a deity seated under serpent-hood canopy and holding a vase and rosary in his hands, is believed to represent Nagarjuna (pi. VIII A). It was originally housed in a shrine to the south-east of the Main Temple. The inscription on the image says that it was the gift of one Bhattamanikya.

Tara.— ^The most favourite goddess of the Buddhists' was Tara, the saviour*, the consort of Avalokite^vara,

1 The line of the verse occurs in Kaly^garbha's sdihaui of

Heruka. SadhanamSldy ed. B. Bhattacharya (Baroda, 1928), II, p. 470.

and it is in the fitness of things that she is represented by a large number of images, the number being second only to that of Buddha. Whether seated or standing, she usually holds a lotus-stalk in her left hand and exhibits varadamudra in the right. In no. 1-1051 the goddess is seated on a high lotus-throne with the right hand in vitarka-mudrd and the left in varada. The hair is tied with a band and hangs down on the back. Another image, no. 1A-304, shows the goddess seated on a lion throne in lalitsana. The inscription on the back reads: Om Tare tuttare ture svdhd. Om Padmavati, Om KurukulU svdhd. Ye dharmd (incomplete). No. 1-743 is a beautiful miniature representation of the goddess, inscribed with the name of the female layworshipper Kajjalaka.

Praj51Aparamita. —PrajnapAramita, the goddess of learning and the deified sacred text of the Buddhists, is represented in no. 1A-82A. The goddess is seated cross-legged on a lotus-throne with her hands forming dharmachakra-mudrd and with a book-on-lotus on each side. Two other bronzes, nos. 1-370 and 4-115, may be regarded as abnormal varieties of the deity.^ Both of these are seated cross-legged, the two original hands forming dharmachakra-mudrd. The first image has ten more hands, holding a pot, noose, conch, book-onlotus, banner, fimt, rosary, sword, abhaya-mudrd and an indistinct object. The second one has

eighteen hands in all and exhibits, besides dharmachakra-mudrā

‘ This has been suggested by Kempers, op. cit., p. 43.

a bell, noose, flag, disc, conch, pot, book-on-lotus and an indistinct object in the left ones and a fruit, conch, sword, vajra, rosary, varada-mudrā and two indistinct objects in the right ones. The throne on which the goddess is seated rests on two human figures each with a serpent-hood canopy and a decorated pillar. The fish, tortoise and makara appearing on the pedestal of the image, may suggest the emerging of the deity out of the sea (pl. VII).

Marīcī. —Marīcī is represented in her common Marīcīpichuvā form in nos. 1A-65 and 1A-122. As is usual, one of the three faces is that of a boar in both the images. The former has eight arms, holding a needle and piece of string in the first pair of her hands, a goad and noose in the second, a bow and arrow in the third and a vajra and (jyotiḥ)-flower in the last. The chariot is drawn by pigs. The latter one, however, is six-armed and the chariot is drawn by horses.

Consort of Jambhala.— Haritī, probably a goddess of fertility in her origin, was absorbed in the Bud'dhist pantheon about the beginning of the Christian era and given to Jambhala as his consort. I-tsing, a Chinese traveller of the seventh century, says that ‘the image of Haritī is found either in the porch or in a corner of the dining hall of all Indian monasteries depicting her as holding a babe in her arms and round her knees three or five children. Every day an abundant offering

i This may have reference to the belief that the Prajñābaramita text was rescued from the land of the mlecchas by Nāgārjuna.

of food is made before the image.’ Of the many images of the deity found at Nālandā mention may be made of the following. No. 1-372 represents the goddess seated in leśāsana with a child on the left knee and the right hand holding a fruit (a symbol of Jambhala). An inscription on the back of the image says that the image was erected in the region of Devapala. No. 1-459 is also the image of the same deity, with the right hand in varada-mudrā and the left holding a stalk which supports a vase with foliage issuing out of it. Five overturned vases on the pedestal, a characteristic of Jambhala, leave no doubt about the identity of the image.

To the same group may be affiliated the goddess Vasudharā with four hands, no. 1-1052, the left hands holding a lotus-stalk and a pot with ears of corn, while the

lower right hand is held in varada-mudra. The name of the donor Bodhipalita is inscribed on the back.

Sarasvatī. —Sarasvatī, who claimed the allegiance of both the Buddhist and Brahmanical faiths, is beautifully represented in no. 1A-95 as seated in *lalitāsana*[^] the hands holding a lute placed on the right knee, with a seated attendant on each side playing on musical instruments.

Aparajita. —Of the other female deities, Aparajita, no. 1A-64, trampling on Ganeśa and attended by Indra holding parasol, is an interesting creation of latterday Buddhism.

I Takakusu, op. cit.[^] p. 37.

Other goddesses. —There are some images of female deities which are difficult to identify. No. 1A-21 is a four-handed goddess, seated cross-legged, the right hands showing a rosary and varada-mudra and the left ones a book-on-lotus and an indistinct object.[^] There is a four-armed female figure, no. 1A-305, with a peacock (?) at the left end of the pedestal; as the symbols are mutilated, it is difficult to propose any identification.* Another baffling stone image is no. 9-201, which is that of a female deity seated in *lalitāsana* on a lotus-throne. The right hands hold a sword and *phat* and left ones axe and noose. A five-hooded serpent-canopy protects the head of the deity (pi. VIII B).

Brahmanical deities.— We now come to the important Brahmanical images. No. 1-887 is a repainted bronze Vishnu 'with the usual four emblems, conch, disc, mace and lotus, and a long garland known as the *vanamālā*; a kneeling female devotee sits on the right end of the pedestal (pi. III B). In no. 1-442 we find Balarama, with four hands carrying a conch, disc, club and plough, with a *vanamālā* and a seven-hooded serpent canopy over the head. An inscription on the back says that the image was erected in the reign of Devapala.

[^] The identification with Chimda has been suggested by p. 43, though the details do not agree. On the other hand, the image closely follows the characteristics of Dhanadāra prescribed in the canons.

*This has now been identified as Mahamayūri. D. Mitra

of the Asiatic Society, I, no. I

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Nos. 4*63 and 46-3856 are stone representations of Siva-Parvati, with their respective vahanas and symbols, seated in an amorous attitude. The latter was found in the compound of the local school. No. 1-722 is a four-handed Durga with a lion-vehicle and a linga on the top. Mahisha-mardini or Durga killing the demon is rather poorly represented in no. 1-594. An interesting variety of Gauri or Durga is found in no. 1A-100, which depicts the goddess as holding a rosary in the upper right hand, a bough of a tree ending in a disc in the upper left and a vase in the lower left, the lower right being broken. An alligator appears on the pedestal, which is supported by a lion and a buffalo.[^]

Of the other Brahmanical deities mention may be made of Surya, no. 1-336, Revanta, no. 1A-123, and Ganda, no. 3-125. A small bronze, no. 1A-158, represents either Gahga on makara or Indrani on elephant.

B. Inscriptions

Copper-plates, —Monastery Site 1 yielded three copper-plate inscriptions belonging to Samudragupta {circa 335-75), Dharmapala {drea 770-810) and Deva' pala {circa 810-50) respectively. The first of these was

[^] The image has been plausibly regarded as representing Gauii or Durga. J. N. Baneiji in Journal [^] the Greater India Society[^] IV (1937), pp. 137 ff. Other images of this type have been found at Nalarida. One of these, no. 11-70, is a miniature bronze in which the goddess holds a UAg in the upper right hand, varada in the lower right, a staff in the upper left and a fruit in the lower left. The [^] animals are identical.

issued from Anandapura on the second day of Magha in the fifth regnal year. At the end prince Chandragupta is mentioned. The genuineness of the record is not above suspicion.[^] The copper-plate of Dharmapala records the grant of a village in the district {viskaya) of Gaya in the Nagara (Patna) division {bhukti).[^] The copper-plate of DevapSla is much more important and has been summarized above (p. 12). The original copper-plates are now in the Indian Museum.

Stone inscriptions. —[^]The following two stone inscriptions, both of which are very important, are now in the NalandS Museum:

(1) Inscription of the time of Talovarmadeva? recording various gifts, including a permanent grant to the temple erected at Nalanda by king Baladitya, by Malada, the son of a minister of king Yaiovarmadeva, evidently the renowned king of Kanauj of the first quarter of the eighth century. The inscription gives a glorious description of Nalanda, extracts of which may be quoted here:

*N[^]anda, with her learned men, famous on account of their (knowledge of) good scriptures and arts, mocks, as it were, at all the cities of great emperors.

‘The row of whose monasteries with their pinnacles kissing the clouds is, as it were, designed by the

» Epimphika Indka, XXV, (1939-40), pp. 59 ff.

» Ibil, XXIII (1935-36), pp. 290 ff.

^Ibid., XX (1929-30), pp. 37 ff. with corrections m/fiiL Qjutrt., VII (1931), p. 669, and VIII (1932), p. 37; Modern Revisio, September, 1931.

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Creator to be a beautiful garland of the earth shining high (in the space), and being the delightful home of the community (of monks) who are the abode of good learning, with the peaces and temples brilliant with the net-work of rays (issuing out) of various jewels, assumes the splendour of the Sumeru, the beautiful home of hordes of noble vidyadkaras,

‘Here, king Baladitya erected this spacious, unique and white palace of the Lord (Buddha), the son of Suddhodana, as if out of a desire to insult Mount Kailua.

‘The palace, it seems, went round the whole earth, disgracing the splendour of the moon, putting a stop to the beauty of the chain of peaks of the Himalaya, then defiling the white river of the sky and silencing the sea of critics; having realized that it was futile to wander about in a world where there was nothing to vanquish, it (now) stands aloft, as if as a pillar of the great fame it has won.’

(2) Inscription of Vipulainmitraf recording the activities of the ascetic Vipulatirimitra, who, among other things, built a temple of Tara, adorned with a court and tank, at Somapura, where he resided for a long time and renovated a local monastery.® At

^ Epigraphia Iridka, XXI (1931-32), pp. 97. ff.

* Somapura has been identified with Paharpur in Rajshahi District of East Bengal, where a huge temple with a monastery and a temple of Tara have been unearthed. It appears that the last was built by Vipulafrimitra, who might have been responsible for some subsequent additions to the monastery attached to the temple.

Nalanda he erected a monastery, *an ornament of the world, surpassing in a wonderful manner the palace of Indra,* and made it over to the line of ascetics to which he belonged. The inscription was recovered from the uppermost level of Monastery Site 7, which, as we have already seen, shows three periods of occupation. On the basis of this inscription we may ascribe the construction of the uppermost monastery to the first half of the twelfth century, to which the inscription may be referred on palaeographical considerations.

Besides these, inscriptions giving the Buddhist creed or names of donors often occur on the stone and bronze images. The more important of them have been mentioned along with the images bearing them.

Brick inscriptions. —^Many brick inscriptions, mostly fragmentary, have been discovered from the core of the small votive stupas attached to the Main Temple. The inscriptions give either the Buddhist creed, dharmay etc., or the more elaborate Niddna-sutra or Pratityasamutpada-sutray with or without the nirodhaportion.^ This sutra is found in many Buddhist texts, both in Sanskrit and Pali. It details Buddha's theory of the Chain of Causation, viz., ignorance produces

^ The object of depositing these texts inside stipas was no doubt to acquire merit. I-tsui^ records the practice of depositing relics of Buddha and the githi on the Chain of Causation, i.e., ye dhamd etc., inside chaityas (Takakusu, op. cit., p. 150). It is interesting to recall the tradition that Kanishka engraved some Buddhist scriptures composed by the Fourth Buddhist Council on some sheets of copper, deposited them in a stone receptacle and built a stupa over it. Beal, Recordsy I, p. 156.

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constituents, constituents produce consciousness, consciousness produces individuality, individuality produces the six organs of sense, the organs produce

contact, contact produces sensation, sensation produces thirst, thirst produces attachment, attachment produces existence, existence produces birth, birth produces old age, death' sorrow, etc. With the suppression of ignorance, all the resultant effects are suppressed, and there is thus no old age, death, sorrow, etc.

No. 3-278A is dated in the Gupta year 197, i.e. A.D. 516-17. As we have seen above (p. 17), this helps us to ascribe the fifth period of the Main Temple to the fifth century. Another brick gives the same Niddna-sutra with its vibkaha or division, the latter portion having been previously known to us only in its Chinese translation.*

Sealings and plaques.— The vast number of sealings and plaques discovered at Nalanda fall under two categories: (1) ecclesiastical and (2) civil. Under the former head come those seals which bear the Buddhistic creed, sometimes with the figure of Buddha, or bear only the image of Buddha without any other stamp. Many specimens of the 'official' seal of the Nālanda Monastery exist, with the legend jVxMl<vida~mahdvihdriy-arya-bhikshu-sangha^a, 'of the Community of Venerable Monks of the Great Monastery at Nalanda.' Above the inscription occurs the dharmachakra with a deer on each side, suggesting the

¹ *Epigraphia Indica*, XXIV (1937-38), p. 20.
² *Ibid.*, XXII (1931-32), pp. 194 ff.

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scene of the Deer-park of Samath, where Buddha first preached the Law, the motif that was also adopted by the Pāla emperors. Sealings of the individual establishments of Nālanda are also found. Mention must also be made of the discovery in one of the votive stupas near Chaitya Site 12 of no less than one thousand unburnt clay caskets, each encasing two small plaques with their stamped faces together.^ They might have been deposited there for earning religious merit.

Of the secular sealings, historically the most important are those which belong to royal personages, such as Narasirhhagupta and Kumaragupta II of the Gupta dynasty, Sarvavarman and Avantivarman of the Maukhari dynasty, Supratishthitavarman and Bhaskaravarman of Assam, Harshavardhana of Kanauj, and PaJupatisihha, Devasimha and lianasimha of an unknown lineage.

The personal sealings give a vast number of names. There are also seals of particular offices, such as the office of the kumdradya in the Magadha

division (bhukti)y office of the GayS. district {visheyd), office of the Rajagriha district, office of the kumdramdtya of the Nagara (Patna) divison, etc.

C. Miscellaneous

The coins found at Nalanda include those of Kumaragupta I and Narasirhhagupta of the Gupta lineage, Saiahka of Bengal {circa 600-20), Adivar3.ha or Bhoja I of the Pratihara dynasty {drea 835-85), and

^ Cf. the discovery of Tara plaques at P^arpur.

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Govindachandra of the Gahadavala dynasty {circa 1114-55). All of these are now deposited in the Indian Museum.

The carved bricks, no doubt used for decorating buildings, portray human and animal figures, faces of demons (kirttimukha), circular discs with floral designs, etc.

The collection of pottery includes earthen jars with mica-dust adhering to their surface, decorated with animal and floral designs and furnished with short spouts.

A small heap of burnt rice is reminiscent of the fire from which N^andS, suffered probably more than once.

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PLATE IX

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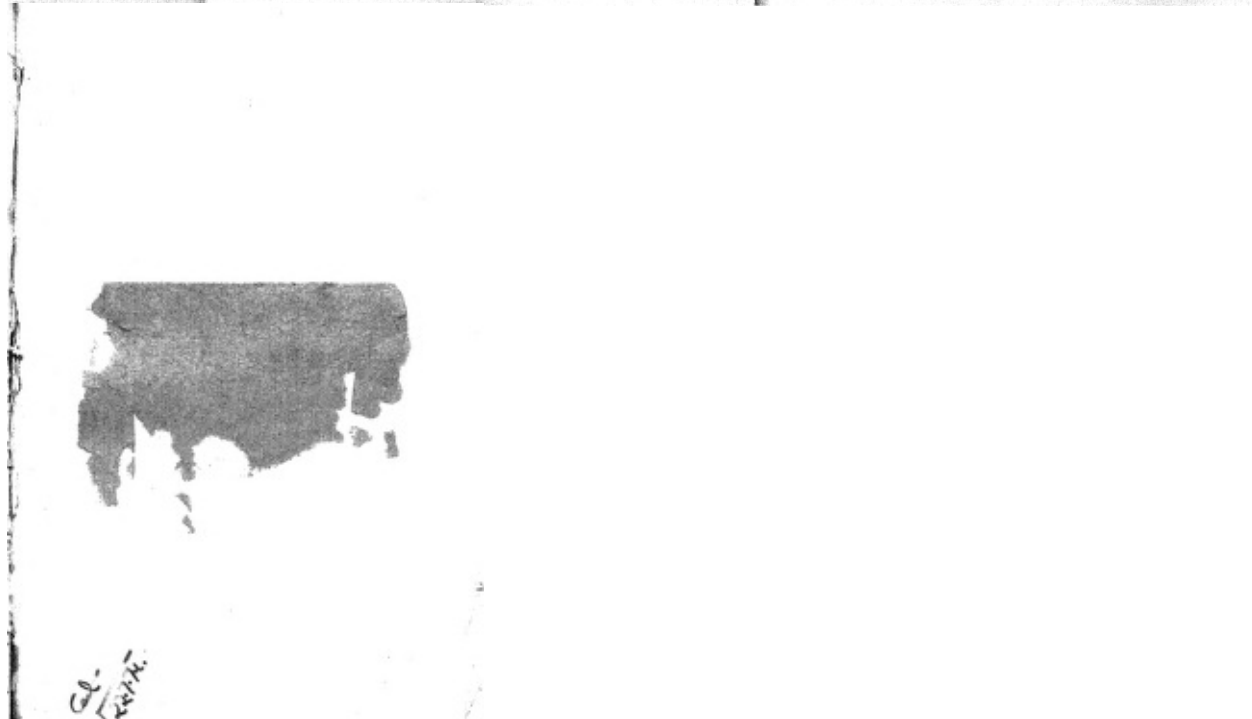
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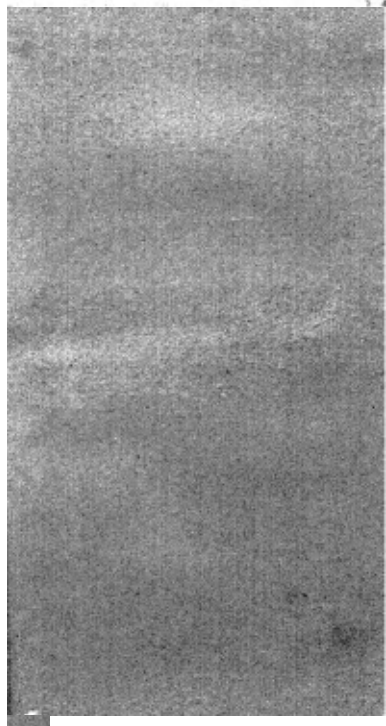
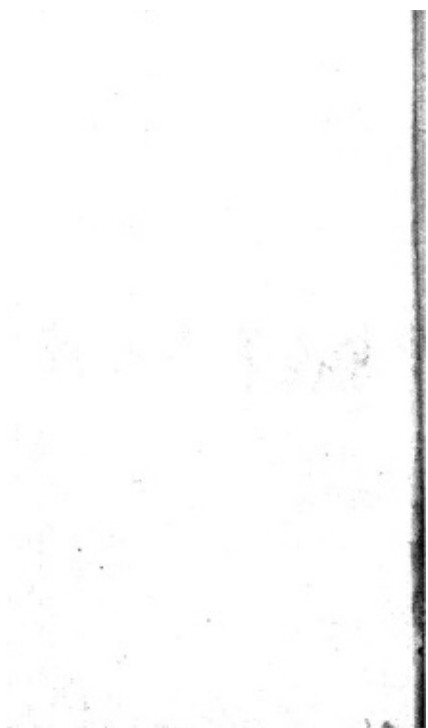
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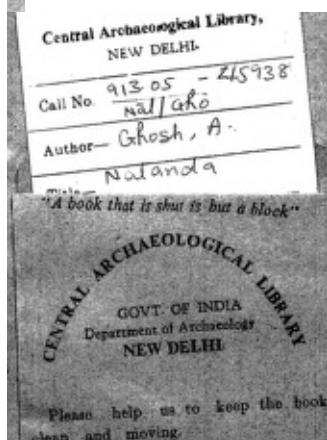
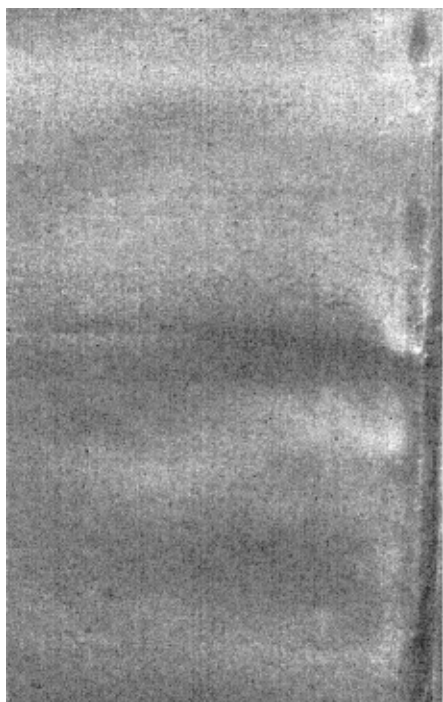
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Author— Ghosh, A.

Nalanda

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